

## About Lurie Children's

Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago is ranked as the top pediatric hospital in Illinois, and #10 in the U.S. in the *U.S. News & World Report* 2018-2019 Honor Roll rankings. Lurie Children's provides superior pediatric care in a state-of-the-art hospital that offers the latest benefits and innovations in medical technology, family-friendly design and research through the Stanley Manne Children's Research Institute.

The main hospital is located in downtown Chicago on the campus of its academic partner, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine. Lurie Children's has a network of 13 outpatient centers and 15 partner hospitals, providing top pediatric care across the greater Chicago area. Lurie Children's relies on philanthropic support to care for nearly 213,000 children each year.

Learn more at [luriechildrens.org](http://luriechildrens.org) or [crfjb.org](http://crfjb.org)



## About the Children's Research Fund Junior Board

Since 1992, the Children's Research Fund Junior Board has been passionate about advancing discovery into new and more effective treatments for childhood diseases. The board supports the work of the researchers and physician-scientists of the Stanley Manne Children's Research Institute at Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago.

Focused on a result-oriented "translational" model of research, scientists in the Manne Research Institute labs are working to develop better and safer therapies for the 213,000 children treated each year at Lurie Children's. As the Junior Board to the Children's Research Fund, a primary philanthropic benefactor of the Manne Research Institute, the Children's Research Fund Junior Board supports investigations in genetics, incurable neuromuscular diseases, epilepsy, and other conditions.

Since its inception, the Children's Research Fund Junior Board has helped raise over one million dollars for pediatric medical research initiatives conducted at Lurie Children's and the Manne Research Institute. Approximately 80 cents of every dollar donated is utilized to fund the current Children's Research Fund Junior Board's research priority.

### 2019 Membership

Co-Chairs	Emily Edkins	Lisa Katz	Merideth Segovia
Brian Duffy	Susan Eiseman	Nikki Keidan	+Lauren Shanley
Katie Lyons	Lauren Frushour	Kristin Keith	Matthew Shanley
	+Brittany Garlenski	Mary Kate Keppler	Natalija Skvirbly
+Brittany Abrahms	Lisa Gelles	Amanda Lemein	Abigail Sosinski
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Brian Allen	+Jonathon George	Kelsey Lewis	Ashley Taff
+Jessica Altman	Laura Goodman	Dan Martino	Hannah Taylor
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+John Dana	+Erika Katz	Michelle Schroeder	



To contribute, please visit [APPEAL.CRFJB.ORG](http://APPEAL.CRFJB.ORG). For more information, please contact Madison Douglas at [MaDouglas@luriechildrens.org](mailto:MaDouglas@luriechildrens.org) or call 312.227.7276.



## The Promise of a Cure

### Healthier Futures for Every Child

To achieve the best health outcomes for children, we must continually invest in research. At the Stanley Manne Children's Research Institute at Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago, multidisciplinary teams of researchers are relentlessly pursuing treatments and cures for a wide range of diseases and disorders.

For the years 2018 and 2019, the CRFJB is supporting the research of Dr. Jill Chang – a neonatologist at Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago and faculty at Northwestern University. Dr. Chang's mission is to study the role of perinatal brain injury on an infant's motor development. She hopes to discover how certain injury leads to conditions such as cerebral palsy, with the goal of early identification of at-risk babies and potential therapeutic interventions. Our support will further accelerate research, and help find cures for childhood illness that will transform the future of pediatric medicine.

**We need your help** to empower our researchers to imagine solutions that don't yet exist, devise new tools and, in the process, redefine treatment.

Inside, you'll see examples of how a gift of any size can help drive pediatric research forward. Together, we will seek to deliver on the promise of a cure and a healthier future for every child.

## Meet Melli

As a Lurie Children's patient, I am forever indebted to the wonderful doctors and nurses who saved my life—not once but **twice**.

Imagine taking your child to an appointment with her pediatrician only to learn she needs to undergo surgery to remove a massive brain tumor. For most people, this would be their worst nightmare. In February of 1988, this frightening circumstance became a reality for my parents. At fourteen and a half months (and then again at eight-years-old) the courageous doctors and nurses at Children's Memorial (now Lurie Children's) saved my life.

I don't remember events as a one-year-old, but my parents retell the story quite often. During a family trip to Florida, my grandmother noticed my left leg dragging when I "furniture walked." She insisted that when we returned home my mom take me to the doctor. My pediatrician noted that my head circumference had grown more than it should have over the three-month period. He ordered an ultrasound which found an abnormality in my brain. The CAT scan and MRI confirmed a massive brain tumor.

When the heart wrenching diagnosis was given to my parents, they decided with the help of family and friends to go where I would have the best possible care – Children's Memorial. Dr. David McLone, Head Pediatric Neurosurgeon, met my parents and examined me in the emergency room at 7pm on Saturday. With kindness and care he confirmed that the tumor was operable, but that my condition was critical. I was checked in and surgery was scheduled for 7am Monday. Instantly, my parents knew they had taken me to the right place.

I underwent an eight-hour operation to remove the tumor. The nurses gave my parents updates throughout the surgery, trying to calm their fears.

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You can support important medical research advances and ensure the Manne Research Institute remains at the forefront of pediatric innovation with a gift of any size.



Mellie & her family at her wedding

(continued) I underwent an eight-hour operation to remove the tumor. I was under the watchful eye of Dr. McLone and staff for the next ten days at Children's. As my parents put it, I left the hospital with a smile, quite an interesting hairdo, and the energy of a healthy 15-month-old. Not long after, I was back to gymnastics, swimming and ballet. My mom tells me how the other mothers in my gymnastics class would comment about how well my coordination and balance were, and her eyes would fill with tears of happiness due to the positive outcome of my surgery. Every year, I returned for a routine MRI and my appointment with Dr. McLone.

*"Understanding how a child moves/walks is critical for the diagnosis and treatment of cerebral palsy (CP). Currently there exist few tests that are able to produce precise movement data for animal models of infant brain injury and CP. Our mouse EMG and 3D kinematic tests employ technology already used in the clinical setting, providing a bridge between animal and human models, and a means to test potential pharmaceutical and genetic therapies."*

- Dr. Jill Chang, Neonatologist



#### SUGGESTED CONTRIBUTION LEVELS:

**\$25**

LAB SUPPLIES

**\$250**

ONE MOUSE MRI

**\$50**

ONE MOUSE ELECTROMYOGRAPHY

**\$500**

20 HOURS OF LAB TIME

**\$150**

ONE MOUSE KINEMATIC MOTOR TEST (EMG) MUSCLE TEST

**\$1,000**

MOUSE GENETIC ANALYSIS

CONTRIBUTE AT: [APPEAL.CRFJB.ORG](https://www.appeal.crfjb.org)

In 1995, the tumor returned. This time it was different, as I was not a baby, but in second grade, so my memory of this is very much ingrained. The emotions I felt were real, and as an eight-year-old, I just wanted to get better, so I could get back to gymnastics and playing with my sisters and friends. We met Dr. Tadanori Tomita along with Dr. McLone for the surgery. I remember my time in the hospital; I remember how kind the nurses were; I remember the nurse taking my hand and walking me down the long hallway to the operating room and as we turned the corner I waved back to my parents; and I remember how I was saved, yet again.

I was given the name "**Miracle Child**" at Children's Memorial—and I really was just that. I owe everything to Dr. McLone and Dr. Tomita. Every year following my second surgery, I would go to Children's for a routine MRI to ensure the tumor was gone. And, every year since, I was given a clean bill of health. When I turned twenty-nine, I went in for my final MRI—Dr. Tomita said I no longer needed to come back for yearly checkups but to stay in touch. And I did just that.

In September of 2017, Dr. Tomita attended my wedding, and it was truly a great feeling having him and his wife there to watch me walk down the aisle. Dr. McLone could not attend but sent a heartfelt note that I'll cherish forever. Not a day goes by that I don't thank my lucky stars for having the wonderful doctors and nurses at Children's Memorial in my life. They've helped shape me into the young woman I am today and for that I am forever grateful.

As a member of the board for five years, I've enjoyed my time giving back. This year, more so than the past, the connection runs much deeper, as my brother Anthony now serves on the board with me. He was just a baby when I had my second brain tumor, so he doesn't remember the uncertainty and emotions that ran through our home. As my brother got older and understood what I went through, he has looked at my strength and will power in a much different way -- in that I breezed through one of life's most challenging circumstances. Now that we have the opportunity to work together on initiatives that support many amazing doctors and brave children, Anthony is experiencing first-hand the determination, unconditional love, and miracles that walk in and out of Lurie's every day.

Making a difference and helping raise money that ultimately saves more children's lives is the greatest success, and I am grateful to be a part of something that impacts so many.



Mellie & Dr. Tomita at her wedding

